

Mr. STEVENS. I ask unanimous consent that those amendments be set aside for consideration of the Dodd amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Connecticut.

AMENDMENT NO. 1817

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I send my amendment to the desk and ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Connecticut [Mr. DODD] proposes an amendment numbered 1817.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To provide an additional \$322,000,000 for safety equipment for United States forces in Iraq and to reduce the amount provided for reconstruction in Iraq by \$322,000,000)

On page 2, line 20, strike "\$24,946,464,000:" and insert "\$25,268,464,000, of which \$322,000,000 shall be available to provide safety equipment through the Rapid Fielding Initiative and the Iraqi Battlefield Clearance program:".

On page 25, line 10, strike "\$5,136,000,000" and insert "\$4,884,000,000".

On page 25, line 16, strike "\$353,000,000" and insert "\$283,000,000".

Mr. DODD. I apologize to my colleagues. I know it is a late hour. This is an important amendment, and I hope my colleagues can support it.

I rise to propose this amendment to the emergency supplemental spending bill to ensure that Congress and the administration keep sight of what I believe must remain our number one priority for the conduct of the operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, the protection of our American troops.

According to the U.S. Army, the President's supplemental bill falls short of over \$200 million for critical gear for our soldiers slated to rotate in Iraq and Afghanistan in the months ahead. This amendment was designed specifically to see to it that those U.S. troops coming into Iraq, into a theater of war, would receive important equipment they need to perform their missions effectively. This equipment includes important high-tech body armor, bullet-proof helmets, special water packs to keep soldiers hydrated, and other survival gear.

I don't need to make the case about what is happening in Iraq on a daily basis, nor do I need to stress the importance of this kind of equipment. My colleagues are well aware of this situation.

As it stands now, the supplemental bill before the Senate only covers expenses for soldiers' personal equipment up to the first 3 months of 2004 and does not take into account very soon a considerable number of men and

women who will be entering the theater to relieve soldiers who are there now.

In an \$87 billion emergency spending package for 2004, one would think we could find enough money to meet the pressing equipment needs of our young men and women in uniform. That is why I was surprised to find an official list from the U.S. Army Comptroller's Office dated September 26 detailing several important items that remain unfunded in this supplemental. Above all else, it is a requirement that thousands of our soldiers, particularly those in the Reserves and the National Guard, be equipped with the most effective personal equipment available. Our troops need this gear to improve their performance in combat and to enhance their safety under intense conditions.

As my colleagues know, every day our men and women in uniform have been ordered into harm's way, sent into extreme heat—exceeding 120 degrees in some cases—with strenuous missions in different settings throughout Iraq and Afghanistan.

My chart shows what a foot soldier wears on his shoulders in Iraq: 60 pounds of body armor, tactical equipment, in hot desert heat, carrying high-tech night vision equipment, special framed backpacks, and other survival gear. In 120 degrees, carrying all this equipment becomes quite burdensome, so they have special hydration systems necessary for troops to safely survive the desert heat. These water pack systems, called camelbaks, are attached to the soldier's backpack to allow easy access to water when they are in motion.

Unfortunately, with the shortage of funds, the Army could not afford to equip all soldiers with this equipment, so many soldiers are using bulky canteens that quickly heat up in the desert sun. Most of the canteens do not have adequate capacity to carry the water they need in Iraq's intense heat.

This information comes from the U.S. Army. I am not making this up from news reports. This is what our military is telling us and where a shortfall exists in this supplemental.

In other cases, the soldiers are paying hundreds of dollars out of their own pockets to buy the equipment themselves, everything ranging from the camelbaks to gun scopes, because in spite of the Army's stated priorities, the administration did not procure enough personnel equipment for these men and women. I think we can do better than that.

The 2003 Defense Appropriations Act included language demanding answers to why the very men and women we send into combat are being forced to spend upwards of \$300 per person. Our own Congress made this point: They are spending up to \$300 per person on equipment to outfit themselves for combat in Iraq. The Army has yet to report on this issue and has established

a rapid fielding initiative designed to outfit our soldiers with the most modern equipment available so they do not have to spend their own money on the latest body armor hydration systems.

Out of \$324.5 million needed to fund this program in Iraq and Afghanistan, only \$122.5 million was to be available in this supplemental budget bill. That means if our soldiers, many of whom are less than 21 years of age, making under \$20,000 a year, want the right gear for their mission, they are going to have to dig into their own pockets to buy their own hydration equipment, radios, weapon sights, combat helmets, and individual body armor.

Let me cite an article that appeared in yesterday's Washington Post called "The Children Of War," section C, page 16. There was an interview with the children whose parents are fighting in the Persian Gulf. One young person points out that her father has been buying other supplies already—a portable hammock, special water pouches, et cetera.

That is from a child talking about her parent having to buy his own equipment. I don't know of anyone who believes that ought to persist.

Now, in response to the Army's request, the committee added \$300 million to the present supplemental request which could be used for either this additional equipment or the clearance of weapons and mines still lingering on Iraqi battlefields. It says it right here, in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, dated October 1, 2003, when the Supplemental Appropriations bill's accompanying report was printed. On page S12222, there is a chart detailing expenditures in the Army Operations and Maintenance account. \$300 million is to be allocated for "SAPI body armor/Rapid Fielding Initiative or battlefield cleanup."

But the Army says it needs an additional \$420 million just to handle the Iraqi battlefield clearance. As the pending legislation stands now, there is still not enough money in the bill to do both, and both items—more safety equipment and Iraqi battlefield clearance—are top Army priorities.

I think we need to address both of these issues. For those reasons, I have asked my colleagues to support this amendment to allocate an additional \$322 million for the critical equipment of our troops and adequate resources for battlefield clearance to fully meet the Army's current requirements.

The funding in my amendment is fully offset by reductions in some of these reconstruction accounts called emergencies. I want to draw my colleagues' attention to them.

Looking at this next chart. I have reprinted items submitted to us by the Administration in their request, entitled "Coalition Provisional Authority Request to Rehabilitate and Reconstruct Iraq," dated September 2003. It lists in this supposed emergency budget proposal, among other things, \$15